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TO: Secretary of State

NO: 182, November 4, 8 p.m.

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FADRC FOI CASE NO. 5-B-201

PRIORITY.

Francisco Villagran Kramer member of PR Political Committee told Embassy today PR is being unjustly labeled Communist. He admitted PR infiltrated at lower levels by Communists as are other politic parties. He said PR now attempting identify Communists in its ranks with view expelling them in near future. He mentioned particularly student front for PR known ARDE which he described as Communist influenced and which he said would soon break away from PR.

Villagran described PR ideology as based largely on new deal. He said PR believed in private property and foreign investment under conditions favorable to national interest.

Villagran said PR has been target of three groups: Communists, exiles in Mexico and Chile, and MDN. He added PR rejected all three. He claimed PR deliberately chose Mendez as its Presidential candidate because it knew he would not be acceptable to Communists who are disgusted with PR because it supported Junta, broke with Ydigoristas and withdrew from public disorders following downfall Gonzalez Government.

Villagran estimates Ydigoras probably should have received 200 votes in last elections of which about 60,000 were PR. He calculated 40 percent of demonstrators in capital were PR, 5 percent Communists and rest Ydigoristas. He estimates total Communist strength in Guatemala as between 3,000 and 5,000 with perhaps 20,000 sympathizers.

In next elections Villagran thinks there will be three principal forces: PR, Ydigoristas, and center candidate. He estimates PR and

Correction made by RM/R

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-2- 182, November 4, 8 p.m., from Guatemala City

and center candidate will poll about 180,000 votes each and Ydigoras 150,000. However he thinks center will poll very few votes perhaps only 20,000 if Cruz is candidate. He said Cruz is immature and has taken equivocal positions especially on Arbenz agrarian reform which he says Cruz supported. He obviously had much higher opinion of Peralta than of Cruz. He said if only Ydigoras and PR ran civil war would follow.

Villagran confided PR did not expect win presidential elections since it realized if decision were thrown into Congress because no candidate gained absolute majority Congress would find in favor of center candidate. He added PR would be satisfied with 8 or 10 seats in Congress and was pinning its hopes on winning Presidential elections 6 years hence.

Villagran remarks should be regarded with some skepticism. He was obviously trying impress us with his non-Communist position and probably his party's aspirations are more optimistic than he himself acknowledges. We received impression his sincerity was open to some doubt.

SPARKS

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(#)Omission; correction to follow.

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